

REMARKS

This application contains claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9-16, 18, 20-28, 30, 31 and 33-36. Claims 1, 3, 10, 13, 15, 20, 22, 25, 27 and 34 are hereby amended. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, 10, 13, 15, 20, 22, 25 and 34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, for use of the word "substantially." Applicants have amended these claims, as well as claim 27, to remove this word. Thus, all the claims in this application are now believed to meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112.

Claims 1-3, 9-11, 13-15, 21-23, 25-27 and 33-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over Esparza et al ("Efficient Algorithms for Model Checking of Pushdown Systems"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Esparza's paper was originally presented at the CAV'00 conference, held July 15-19, 2000. Applicants submit herewith a Declaration under 37 C.F.R. 1.131 proving that the invention recited in the claims of the present patent application was reduced to practice prior to July 15, 2000. Applicants subsequently described the invention in U.S. Provisional Patent Application 60/261,539, filed January 15, 2001, from which the present patent application claims priority. In view of this provisional patent application, Esparza is

disqualified as prior art against the present patent application under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), while the attached Declaration disqualifies Esparza as prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(a), as well. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-3, 9-11, 13-15, 21-23, 25-27 and 33-35 are patentable over the cited art.

Claims 4, 6, 7, 16, 18, 20, 28, 30 and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over U.S. Patent 5,481,717 to Esparza. Applicants believe that the Examiner intended to reject these claims over the above-mentioned paper by Esparza in view of U.S. Patent 5,481,717 to Gaboury. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, because Esparza is disqualified as prior art for the reasons explained above. Therefore, claims 4, 6, 7, 16, 18, 20, 28, 30 and 31 are believed to be patentable over the cited art.

Applicants have studied the additional references made of record by the Examiner and believe all the claims in the present patent application to be patentable over these references, as well, whether the references are taken individually or in any combination.

Applicants believe the amendments and remarks presented hereinabove to be fully responsive to all of the grounds of rejection raised by the Examiner. In view of these amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that

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all of the claims in the present application are in order for allowance. Notice to this effect is hereby requested.

If the Examiner has any questions he is invited to contact the undersigned at 202-628-5197.

Respectfully submitted,

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